TARGETZERO: 2010 AT THE FORKS

April 17, 2008

Target Zero Update: Geothermal Heating/Cooling System Could Become a Reality at The Forks Market By 2009

The Forks, Winnipeg – The Forks just got a few steps closer to its Target 0:2010 with the announcement today that a geothermal heating and cooling system has passed the feasibility tests and is now entering the design phase.

"Six months ago we announced our plans to reduce our carbon footprint to zero at The Forks by looking at the supply, consumption and carbon offsets at the site," says Jim August, Chief Executive Officer, The Forks North Portage Partnership. "We're pleased to announce today that one of the largest projects in that plan has been given the green light to proceed to design phase. Geothermal heating and cooling could be a reality at The Forks within the next year."

The project has passed the due diligence phase and once implemented will reduce the carbon emissions of The Forks Market by up to 1 kilotonne a year. The system has been custom designed to suit the specific needs of the building and will almost completely eliminate the use of gas for heating and cooling in The Market.

The project is expected to cost approximately $3.1 million and will self finance through a combination of energy savings and costs slated for the replacement of the existing HVAC system.

"The HVAC system in The Forks Market is nearly 20 years old and is in need of replacement. We took those costs in to consideration as well as the savings and realized that this really will work," says Paul Jordan, Chief Operating Officer, The Forks. "More than that though we are insulating ourselves against ever increasing energy costs by installing a system where we aren't reliant on others to set the prices."

The geothermal system that is now entering the design phase is relatively simple in its nature. (See attached diagram for the schematic of the system)

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"What this really boils down to is that when it's hot outside we will be releasing heat out of The Forks Market that will be stored in the geothermal system. In winter we will call on those reserves and take back that heat to warm the building," says Jordan. "It's a supply and demand system that will ultimately save us nearly half a million dollars a year on heating and cooling costs."

As a pilot project, The Forks Market system will act as a test for future uses of geothermal energy at The Forks. A district system, where other tenants could draw heating and cooling energy, could be created a little further down the Red River.

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For more information, please contact
Clare MacKay
Manager, Marketing and Communications
The Forks North Portage Partnership
Phone: 204-987-4360
Cell: 204-291-9151
Email: clare.mackay@tf-np.ca

WHAT IS TARGET ZERO?

Why at The Forks? We get nearly 4 million visitors a year. That's a lot of garbage, a lot of toilets being flushed, a lot of exhaust from cars and a lot of expensive power to heat and cool our buildings. With TARGET 0 we are investigating how we can harness the power of the earth, work on offsetting your car's effects and reduce our footprint to zero in any way we can.

We know it's going to be a lot of hard work and we'll have to be innovative. We also know that we don't have all the answers yet. There are some great partners and experts we have paired up with to show us the best ways to do things. We'll need to ask for your help sometimes.

We will look hard at the numbers involved in achieving our goals. With the exception of carbon offsets, there is a cost saving for us involved in each project and our return on investment would be seen in some cases in a few short years.
If we get it right, we will be helping the planet in our own small way and making The Forks a leader in our community.

We've divided our target strategy in to three sections: Consumption, Supply and Carbon Offsets.

CONSUMPTION
What can we do better about the things we consume? For example, we can convert cooking oil to biodiesel and possibly become a downtown biocomposting hub.

SUPPLY
We can find alternate, greener supplies for the site's power, water and heating/cooling needs.

CARBON OFFSETS
Visitors, staff and tenants produce 5,610 tonnes of carbon on our site. That's the equivalent of 1,501 Olympic-sized swimming pools each and every year. By collaborating on bike routes and facilities, walking paths and improving on alternate ways to access the site, while offsetting the carbon emissions with plantings and other initiatives, we can work to balance the effects of the car.

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CONSUMPTION

With our goal of reducing our footprint to zero, we've looked at ways we can reduce, reuse and recycle.

METERING
The very first step in reducing energy use is to know where we are using it. The Forks has very few utility meters and a very large bill. We are increasing metering to find where we are consuming electricity and natural gas. By knowing where we are using it, we can develop strategies to reduce it.

Update: We are entering the planning and design phase. The project will still need to pass a feasibility phase.

ALTERNATIVE USES FOR OUR WASTE OIL FUEL SUPPLY
From french fries to tractor fuel. We intend to explore converting the used oil that comes out of our restaurants' deep fryers to biodiesel that can power our tractors and other equipment at The Forks. By doing this, we divert this oil from the waste stream and reduce carbon emissions.

Update: By spring 2008, a test vehicle using converted biodiesel is expected to be piloted at The Forks. If the results are favourable the remainder of the site's maintenance vehicles will be converted in the fall of 2008.

BIOCOMPOSTING and RECYCLING
We can take our garbage, the stuff that's not recyclable, and compost it on-site. Composting uses all types of organic materials: grass clippings, leaves, tea bags, fruit rinds, egg shells and much more. Once the materials decompose, we can use them for organic fertilizer. We are looking at becoming a composting facility for others in our downtown. We are also exploring the possibility of capturing the heat that the composting process creates and finding an alternate use for it.

Update: Biocomposting is still in the research phase. If successful, up to 80% of The Forks Market's waste could be biocomposted and reused on the site for fertilizer. We will be recycling all materials at The Forks Market beginning in two weeks.

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MATCHING WATER USE

There are three different kinds of water. The water we use to flush the toilets, water the grass, and flood the skating rinks at The Forks is the same type of water we use to drink. It's the best water there is, but we don't need to be using it for those purposes. We should be saving drinking quality water just for drinking and washing.

Update: By this summer, all irrigation done on The Forks site will be river water. This winter skating rinks will be flooded with captured rain water from barrels already installed near the parkade. We are converting the entire Forks Market to low flow toilets by fall 2008.

GREEN STORES

A green storefront at The Forks could sell to both the general public and our tenants. Common items like cups, napkins and bags would be of most use to our tenants. But, the sky is the limit on what we could sell to the general public. We'd also like our tenants to adopt the "100 mile" food concept wherever possible while showcasing local products.

Update: Under development.

CARBON OFFSETS

The biggest project we are investigating is how to reduce or offset carbon emission on our site. That boils down to reducing the impact of cars to get as close to zero as we can.

Some of the projects we are looking at include bike racks and connections to bike paths, increased transit and alternate modes of transport. Other projects would directly offset the carbon on the site, by finding ways to eliminate it from the air. Planting more trees to "soak up" the carbon is a good example of offsetting emissions.

We're researching alternate sources of supply for the site's power and water needs. A few of them we've already started and some may not even be possible. It's all just part of our goal to target zero by 2010.

Update: A study with the University of Manitoba is underway to determine how much carbon is currently being "absorbed" on The Forks site. Once we know that figure, we can subtract it from the amount we know we produce and develop plans to absorb or offset the remainder.

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SUPPLY

WIND TURBINE
Wind energy is something we have been looking at for a few years at The Forks. Currently there is a meteorological tower installed on our site measuring the amount of wind we could potentially capture. If all goes well, we will be able to erect the first urban wind turbine in Manitoba.

Wind energy is clean energy, just like hydro energy. What makes wind energy appealing to The Forks is that it could help us reduce the $500,000 bill we have at The Forks Market alone. We would accomplish this by creating energy from the wind turbine which would go back in to the hydro grid. We would then free up energy to be sold to foreign clients who are, for the most part burning coal to gather their energy.

Update: In data collection phase.

EARTH ENERGY
We have entered the design phase of our geothermal energy project. The $3.1 billion project is expected to be completed in spring 2009. Essentially, 63 – 200 foot holes are being drilled. In to those holes vertical pipes filled with a glycol solution are inserted. The whole system looks like a house radiator and acts as a vertical loop. Those all attach to one central pipe that runs under the river to two "radiators" located close to the Forks Historic Port that feed into a central heat pump that will run around the top of The Forks Market. That heat pump system releases heat or cool air through a series of ECM fans in 43 zones.

SOLAR LOADING
We continue to explore ways which we can use the sun's heat on our site. Could we install glass panels in an area to heat the room? Or could we heat water? There is really no limit when it comes to the power of the sun.

Update: Feasability study is nearing completion. An unexpected finding shows us that we may be able to take the solar energy we collect and put it in to the geothermal loop.

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WATER

Water crosses both the supply and consumption areas of our plan. We are exploring the possibility of installing gigantic rain capture tanks that collect the water running off The Forks Market roof. Called grey water, this water would be entirely appropriate to flush toilets or irrigate the site, saving water and saving us money. Plus, there is a possibility we can take the heat from water used to flush toilets and divert it to heat water in the building.

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